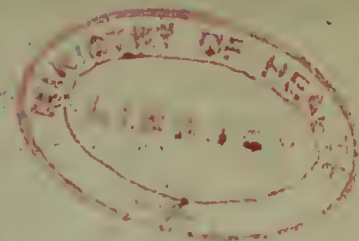


PRESTON RURAL DISTRICT.

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INTERIM REPORT  
of the  
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH  
for the Year ended 31st December, 1939.  
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To the Chairman and Members of the  
Preston Rural District Council.  
Gentlemen,

The Ministry of Health, in Circular 2067 (England), dated the 19th July 1940, states "In view of the increasing pressure of work in the Public Health Department of Local Authorities and the need for strict economy in the use of paper the Minister considers that Interim Reports only should be made for the year ended 1939. These Reports may be type-written if desired and should be confined to essential and urgent matters which have effected the public health during the year, especially any matters arising from or connected with the war, outbreaks of infectious disease, administration of maternity and child welfare together with any exceptional administrative measures taken or recommended by the Medical Officer of Health.

Matters arising from or connected with the War.

Evacuation Scheme:- Under the Government Evacuation Scheme Preston Rural District was constituted a "Reception Area" to be used for the reception of transferred persons.

Under the Scheme, 3,128 children were evacuated from a large Lancashire town in contingents on 1st, 2nd and 3rd September; they were distributed to Townships and Parishes in the Rural District. A proportion of these were verminous, dirty and under-nourished and their habits were definitely dirty, sometimes filthy. The introduction of children of this type into scrupulously clean and tidy families was strongly resented, and may I add, "no wonder". Many returned to their homes, but where the evacuated children remained their physical conditions improved beyond recognition, and eventually they practically became "one of the family" which had received them.

Civil Nursing Reserve:- Volunteers for this Service were enrolled and the names forwarded to the County Medical Officer of Health.

Billeting of Soldiers:- So far this area has not been utilised for this purpose.

Medical Services:- Hospital Accommodation. At the Mental Hospital in this area 900 beds were made available for war casualties.

Air Raid Precautions:- Ten First Aid Depots have been provided in the Rural District, located 4 North and 6 South of the Ribble, together with two Mobile Units placed 1 North and 1 South, with the necessary equipment and personnel. Sufficient people were well trained to provide the personnel attached to the 10 Depots. All these services are voluntary.

Outbreaks of Infectious Disease.

The notifications received during 1939 totalled 145 (excluding measles and whooping cough, and cases of bacillary dysentery in the Mental Hospital), as compared with 149 notifications in the year 1938; they were - scarlet fever 76, diphtheria 31, enteric fever 1, puerperal pyrexia 3, erysipelas 12, and acute pneumonia 22. The diphtheria cases were distributed over nine Townships. Pulmonary tuberculosis contributed 23 cases and non-pulmonary 13.

Houses disinfected numbered 127.

Provisional Regulations, dated 23rd October 1939, made measles and whooping cough notifiable; 1 case of measles and 4 cases of whooping cough were reported up to and including 3rd December, 1939.



## Measures for Maternity and Child Welfare, etc.

The Maternity and Child Welfare and School Clinics and the Ante-Natal Clinics provided by the County Council were fully maintained. The attendances at the Barton Centre numbered 285 and at the Catforth Centre 359. The County Council Nursing Service made 2,791 home visits and 88 visits to expectant mothers in the Rural District.

There are 9 State Midwives in practice in the Rural Area, and maternity cases are admitted, as required, to the Preston Royal Infirmary and the Sharoe Green Hospital. An Obstetric Specialist is available for consultations.

Thirteen nurses provided by the Lancashire County Nursing Association serve the Rural area - the cases attended during 1939 were - midwifery 51, maternity 51, tuberculosis 7, and general 1,173. The total visits paid were 23,193.

Milk for School Children:- Under the County Scheme 13,858 pints of milk were supplied to schoolchildren.

## Statistical Records.

The Ministry Circular referred to in the first paragraph of this Report, states "Suitable arrangements should be made for careful preservation of all records, including the statistics supplied by the Registrar General, in order that after the termination of the war a report could be made dealing more fully with the period from the beginning of 1939 to the end of the last complete year, giving separate statistics for each year in order that the annual records may, as far as practicable, be continuous and complete".

The Official Statistics relating to births and deaths have not yet been received by the County Authority for distribution to the various County districts. In accordance with the Ministry's instruction, when these come to hand, the statistical tables, birth and death rates etc. usually included in my Report will be prepared and handed to the Clerk of the Rural Council for preservation.

The same remark also applies to other statistical matter usually printed in my Report, viz., the Sanitary Inspector's, Building Inspector's and Engineer's Reports, Tables relating to water supply, food and drug sampling, notification of infectious diseases, and the County Summary Form.

## General Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

The basic sanitary services, comprising amongst others, housing, water supplies, sewerage, refuse removal and cleansing, inspection of food supplies, etc., have continued to develop steadily, but only brief references are here given to some of the principal items. The full records are filed for future reference.

New Houses:- During 1939 new houses erected numbered 405 - 18 by the Local Authority (with State Authority), and 387 by private persons.

Water Supplies:- Houses connected during 1939 numbered 370, and 2,521 yards of new mains were laid.

Sewerage:- The 5 sewage disposal works were well maintained. Grimsargh. A new scheme of sewerage and sewage disposal was prepared and submitted to the Ministry; a Local Inquiry was held.

Lea. A scheme for this Township was also prepared.

Owing to the outbreak of war these schemes were suspended. Longton and District. The scheme for this area has also been under consideration.

Refuse Disposal and Cleansing:- The 17 Parishes are now regularly scavenged by direct labour. Houses cleared numbered 9,111, loads of refuse dealt with by controlled tipping 3,841, approximating 7,292 tons.

Protection of the Food Supply:- The activity associated with former years as regards this important matter was continued and perhaps increased. The 649 dairy farms with approximately 12,251 cows, were kept under constant supervision; 127 samples of milk were submitted to biological tests for T.B.; 281 milks were examined for sediment; 846 samples of various foods were taken under the Adulteration Acts, 27 certificates were issued in relation to premises for the manufacture or sale of ice cream. Under the Meat Regulation 7,182 animals were inspected. Unsound food (meat etc.) condemned approximated to 7 tons, 5 cwts.

Town Planning:- Considerable activity was displayed in this direction. Applications to develop amounted to 326 - permission granted 202, permission subject to conditions 111, refused 13.

Parks and Playing Fields:- Commendable progress has again been made in providing open spaces and playing fields. During 1939 seventeen additional acres of land were purchased, bringing the total area of public open spaces in the Rural Area to 108 acres. Air raid shelters have been provided on six playing fields.

In conclusion, I trust this abbreviated Report will be acceptable to the Council, under the assurance that a full statement of the statistics, etc. for the year will be available later, so that the annual records will be continuous and complete.

I am much indebted to Mr. Young, your Clerk, Mr. Collier, Senior Sanitary Inspector and Engineer, together with the two additional Sanitary Inspectors and other Officials, for their valuable help and assistance extended to me throughout a very difficult time.

I have the honour to be,  
Your obedient Servant,

C. J. TRIMBLE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

August, 1940.

